

Mirine – Fulfinum, Island of Krk

Country or territory:
Republic of CROATIA

Name of organization
compiling the information:
Ministry of Culture,
Conservation Department in Rijeka

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Name and address of building or site: MIRINE - FULFINUM, island of Krk, Sepen Bay, Omišalj

Inventory reference number: 308

Building(s) type: Archaeological zone, ancient city, early Christian complex, necropolis

Main date(s): I-II century AD, V-Vi, XI centuries

Current use(s): Archaeological zone, ethnographic zone

Significance:

An ancient city of Roman veterans founded in I-II century AD, covering cc 4 hectares, which persevered until the founding of the monastery complex of St. Nicolas basilica (?) in the V century. The church structure is of monumental dimension 12 x 28 m, preserved up to the roof cornice. The ground plan of the complex is in the shape of a Latin cross with a narthex, cloister and remains of a monastery, memorial and pre-Christian and Christian cemeteries. A triumphal arch separates the main church hall from the presbytery with subsellium. In the narthex there are four late antique/early Christian tombs with valuable findings of one sealed sarcophagus. The narthex ends with a tower that, in the other direction, holds the southern porch of the cloister.

The church is in the western periphery of the city, and further to the east is the thermal complex with a hypocaust in the vicinity of which there is another tri-apsidal structure and even more to the West the Kurilovo necropolis. Finds of very small parts of architectural plastic and ceramics are numerous, while tomb finds are few. An ancient port has been reconnoitred in the sea.

After the monastery complex was abandoned in the XI-XII centuries the present day parish church in Omišalj was founded on the near by hill overlooking the sea. It is of interest to note that the church complex in Mirine was used almost to the present day as a plough-field.

Categories of Significance:

International importance

Categories of ownership or interest:

The Church is in private ownership as agricultural land. The whole space between two large present industrial zones is both archaeologically and agriculturally a neglected landscape. Research and presentation activities are in their initial stages as far as key structures are concerned. The idea is to institute a long-term international archaeological camp and after each campaign to return suitable spaces with planted olive trees and through the planting of new olive-groves within the financial framework of the project. From the early Christian complex and necropolises it is necessary to move on to the land area of the city whose forum complex has been researched by probing, while the remaining area only reconnoitred. The basilica itself could serve in the final stages of research as museum space and be roofed with modern protective materials.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

The basilica has been architectonically surveyed and photographically documented. All the finds of the previous research have been processed and the results reported. Some of the earlier phases have been documented and the works published in scientific journals.

Bibliography: N. Novak, The chorus in the early Christian church in Mirine near Omišalj on the island of Krk, Hortus Artium Mediaevalium 5, Zagreb-Motovun 1999; A. Šonje, The early Christian basilica near Omišalj on the island of Krk, Krk Anthology 21, Krk 1990; N. Novak, The Early Christian Complex in Mirine in Sepen Bay near Omišalj on the island of Krk, Starohrvatska prosvjeta 21, 1991 (95); V. Dautova Ruševljan, The ancient ruins Mira in Sepno near Omišalj, Krk Anthology 5, 1972; A. Faber, Fulfinum - ancient city, Archaeological Review 19, 1977; D. Zelić, The Formation of Urban Settlements on the Island of Krk, work of the Art History Institute 17/2, 1993.

Condition:

The condition of the monument where conservation interventions were undertaken is good. The condition of the city of Fulfinum is poor. After research in the 70s the conservation of the finds was not done. The space is degraded by cattle breeding and unauthorised research by amateurs and divers.

Risk:

The archaeological zone is at risk from the nearby industry within whose land area are inaccessible parts of the complex. It is necessary to levy monument rent. The space is occasionally degraded by the local population through the cutting of underbrush and sheep raising. Unauthorised amateur researchers are also a threat. The neglected and disorderly state of the land register and private ownership records, fragmented plots of disappearing olive-groves and vineyards are also a problem.

Condition risk:

The site is slowly deteriorating and material is lost through erosion, destruction of the part of the landowners and unauthorised researchers, theft. Solutions have been found and ideas exist for long-term work, however the sources of financing are insufficient.

Technical assessment and costings:

In the next ten years the Ministry of Culture, Municipality of Omišalj, the Primorsko-goranska County, the nearby industries and other financial sources should provide approximately 1,000,000 EURO. Continuous systematic archaeological research and conservation should be undertaken and the finds stored.

Ownership:

The ownership is mostly private. Only the coastal belt is public property. Where owners are unknown it is necessary to examine the disorderly land-ownership records.

Occupation:

The space is partly and occasionally used for agricultural and stockbreeding purposes and only minimally for olive growing. The developed part of the complex is used for storing materials, for the needs of the archaeological camp and for summer cultural and religious events.

Management:

The real responsibility lies with the owners of the plots with whom there are occasional disputes. The developed part is managed by the Omišalj municipality, although that land too is in private ownership. The administering of finances would be implemented by the Municipality while supervision and management of all activities by the Conservation Department in Rijeka.

The question is who is responsible for managing the structure, whether the owners or the users, and should funds be provided who will be responsible for administering the financial transactions and who for supervising the works.

Summary:

The Church in Mirine is the only place of worship with a cross-shaped ground plan on the entire Adriatic and is unique as such. Likewise, its state of preservation is valuable in world proportions. The site is also unique because of the location of the city in its immediate vicinity so that a cross-section of all types of research is possible. A significant part of the site has been presented and the city's large surface enables long-term continued work in cooperation with international teams from archaeological institutions. There is another ancient city on Krk, between Velika and Mala Luka in the vicinity of Baška, opposite Senj also with early Christian sites making it possible to shift activities from one site to another. The site is at risk from the local population, ill-intentioned visitors and the industry with its inadequate interventions in space.

Sign and date:

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